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SUBJECT: DPKO U/SYG GUEHENNO CONCERNED ABOUT UNAMID WEAKNESS

REF: A. KHARTOUM 2017

[1](#)B. USUN 1132

[1](#)C. USUN 1153

Classified By: Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad for Reasons 1.4 B/D.

[1](#)1. (C/NF) SUMMARY: At a December 17 working lunch at UN Headquarters, Deputy Secretary Negroponte and U/SYG for Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) Jean Marie Guehenno reviewed problems with the deployment of peacekeepers to Darfur (UNAMID). Guehenno said that he continued to be concerned about TCC shortfalls and delays and with GOS obstacles in the run-up to the December 31 AMIS to UNAMID transfer of authority. Guehenno said DPKO continued to hold Egyptian troop contributions to one battalion to offset "perceptions" that Egypt was "too close" to the GOS and suggested that the U.S. might also raise this with Egypt. The Deputy Secretary inquired about the appointment of a UN-AU chief mediator to handle day-to-day interactions with the rebel groups and the GOS and lamented the lack of progress on the political track. On Afghanistan, the Deputy Secretary told Guehenno that the U.S. is committed to Paddy Ashdown's candidacy as an SRSG for Afghanistan. Guehenno said the U.S. could be helpful on Kosovo by weighing in with the Secretary General in support of the U.S.-EU led scenario for supervised independence for Kosovo. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (U) U.S. Participants: Deputy Secretary John Negroponte, AMB Zalmay Khalilzad, D Staff Gustavo Delgado, USUN MSC LTC Glenn Sadowski, USUN Poloff Jesse Levinson (notetaker). UN Participants: U/SYG Jean Marie Guehenno, A/SYG Edmond Mulet, Darfur Planning Director Mike Gaoutte, and Military Advisor Major General Per Arne Five.

DPKO: UNAMID Lacks Key Capabilities

[1](#)3. (C/NF) The Deputy Secretary told UN DPKO U/SYG Guehenno at a December 17 working lunch that the U.S. wanted to be as helpful as possible in facilitating the deployment of a robust peacekeeping force to Darfur. Guehenno responded that he was "very worried" about the peacekeeping force's lack of capacity. He noted the December 14 attack by unidentified gunmen on an AMIS convoy in North Darfur (ref A) as a disturbing sign regarding the security conditions the peacekeepers would encounter upon arrival.

[1](#)4. (C/NF) With regard to the deployment, Guehenno was skeptical about any significant increase in UNAMID's capabilities vis a vis AMIS until late February or early March (ref B). The initial deployment of Egyptian and

Ethiopian infantry battalions would move relatively quickly in early 2008, but beyond these close to 3,000 troops UNAMID will not have any additional military capabilities in place for quite some time. The main body of Chinese engineers and their equipment should arrive mid-January, but could arrive even later. Guehenno expressed pessimism that the forces on the ground at the December 31 Transfer of Authority (TOA) would be able to effect any immediate security improvement on the ground in Darfur.

¶5. (C/NF) Guehenno asked the U.S. to continue assisting DPKO with efforts to identify TCCs to provide the missing helicopters and transport assets. At the close of the meeting, Guehenno provided the Deputy Secretary with a current list of the countries that DPKO has contacted requesting helicopters.

GOS Not Following Through on Lisbon Commitments

¶6. (C/NF) With regard to the December 13 UN-GOS agreements on the margins of the EU-Africa Summit, A/SYG Mulet said that GOS had subsequently reopened all the accoutrement (blue berets, arm bands, etc.) issues they had agreed to in Lisbon.

The UN planned to proceed with the January 1 rehatting of AMIS to UN forces as if the agreement still stood. Mulet reported Sudanese backpedaling on commitments to resolve outstanding issues with land for bases, night flights, and a formal response to the UN-AU TCC list (ref C). A/SYG Mulet conceded that the GOS had released some communications equipment from al-Fasher Airport and that Status of Forces Agreement discussions were ongoing, but his view was that the

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Sudanese have still not "made the strategic commitment" to allow a peacekeeping force.

Egypt Playing Unhelpful Role in Fifth Committee

¶7. (C/NF) Guehenno noted that Egypt continued to insist on fielding the full two battalions it had offered up for UNAMID. They were now blocking the UN budget in the fifth committee, ostensibly in an effort to force the issue. (NOTE:Per USUN contacts, Egypt's motivations are primarily financial. END NOTE.) Guehenno said that he continued to push back on additional Egyptian troops because of his concern that the Darfur rebel groups perceive the Government of Egypt as far too close an ally of President Bashir. Increasing the Egyptian components of the force, he believes, would decrease UNAMID's legitimacy with the local population and potentially endanger the safety of the entire operation. Guehenno observed that the U.S. might be able to help with the Egyptians on this point. The Deputy Secretary was non-committal.

DPKO: Darfur Peace Process Needs Full-Time Attention

¶8. (C/NF) The Deputy Secretary asked about the pending appointment of a UN-AU chief mediator to handle day-to-day interactions with the rebel groups and the GOS. Guehenno agreed that the Darfur peace process needed more of a "full time" commitment than the UN and AU Special Envoys, Jan Eliasson and Salim Ahmad Salim, could provide. He added that the politics of the situation required an African, preferably an Arabic speaker. Guehenno reported that UNDP Development Policy Director Carlos Lopez had declined the job, but referred to two former Algerian Permanent Representatives to the UN, Abdullah Baali and Muhammad Sahnoun, as potential

candidates.

¶9. (C/NF) Guehenno expressed doubt, however, that the GOS was sincerely interested in moving forward with a viable peace process. He thinks that elements of the Sudanese Government, mainly Military Intelligence and key members of President Bashir's inner circle, still view "divide and rule" as their best strategy for dealing with the Darfur crisis. Guehenno quipped that the Sudanese were still relying on their long established strategy for dealing with Darfur rebel groups, what he called "the three B's - bomb, bribe and bargain."

Afghanistan

¶9. (C/NF) The Deputy Secretary told Guehenno that the U.S. is committed to Paddy Ashdown's candidacy as a an SRSG for Afghanistan. Guehenno did not voice an opinion directly, but said that the terms of reference and the number of hats, i.e. a joint NATO and UN appointment, would have to be resolved.

Kosovo

¶10. (C/NF) On Kosovo, Guehenno said it would be useful for the U.S. to speak with SYG Ban to encourage him to be supportive of the U.S.-EU led scenario for supervised independence for Kosovo. Guehenno opined that the SYG had already heard from several other delegations on the issue who were "pushing him very hard."

¶11. (U) D has cleared this message.
Khalilzad